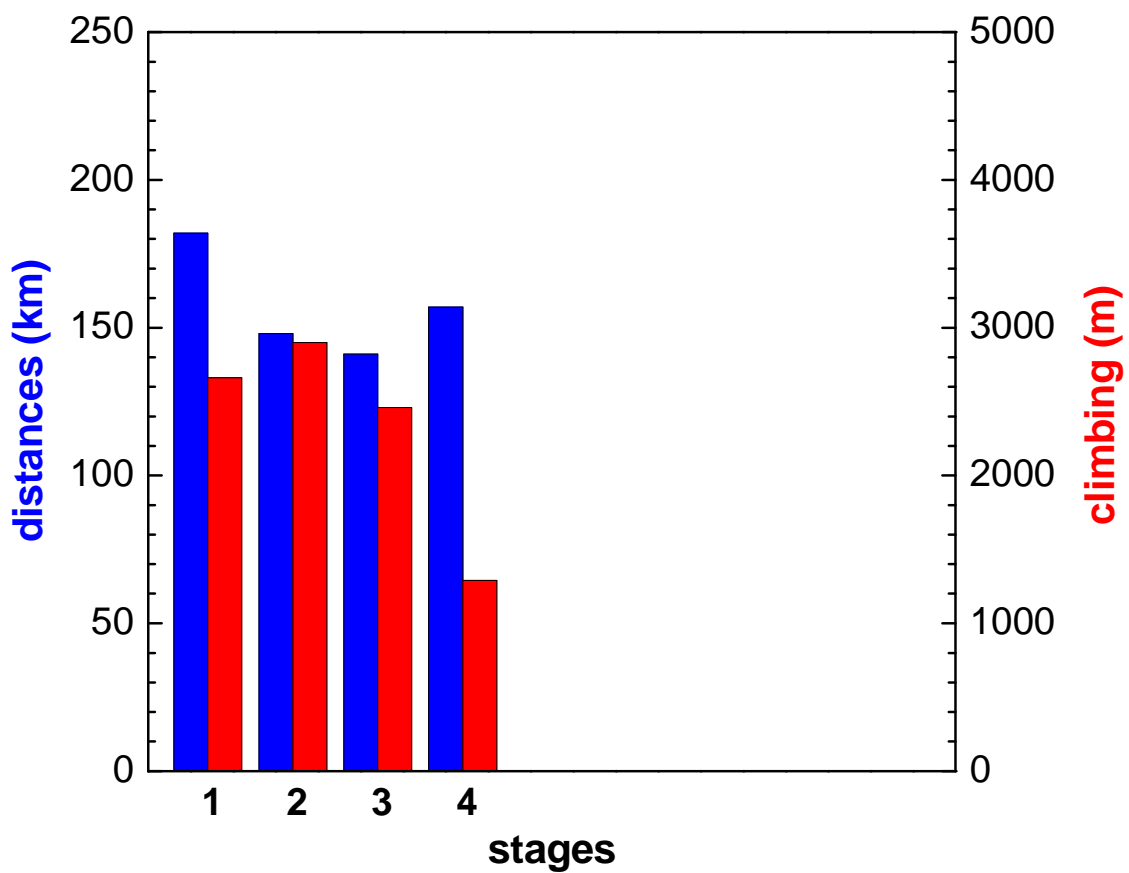


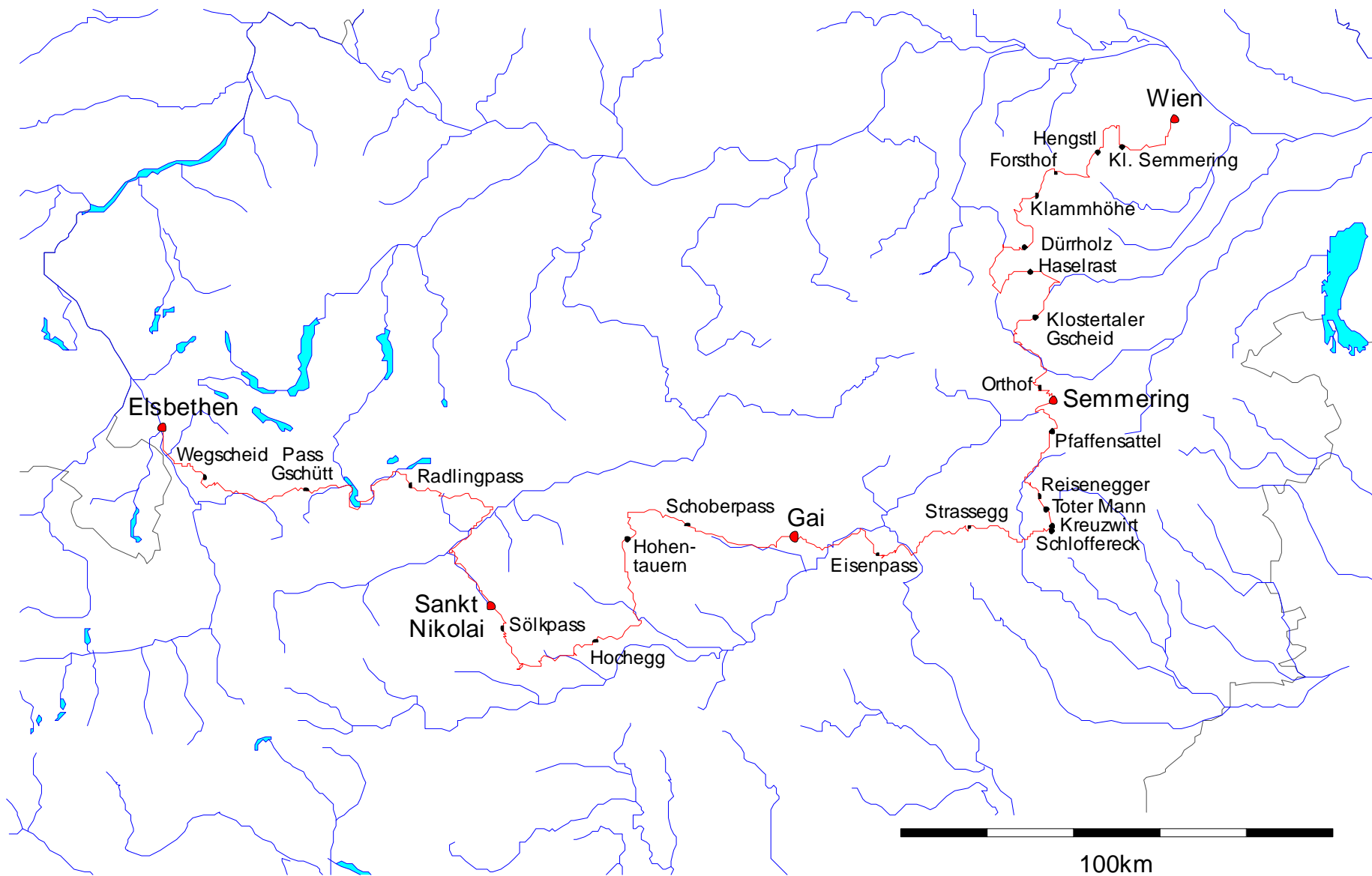
Bicycle tour 2008

4 stages, 25 - 28 June

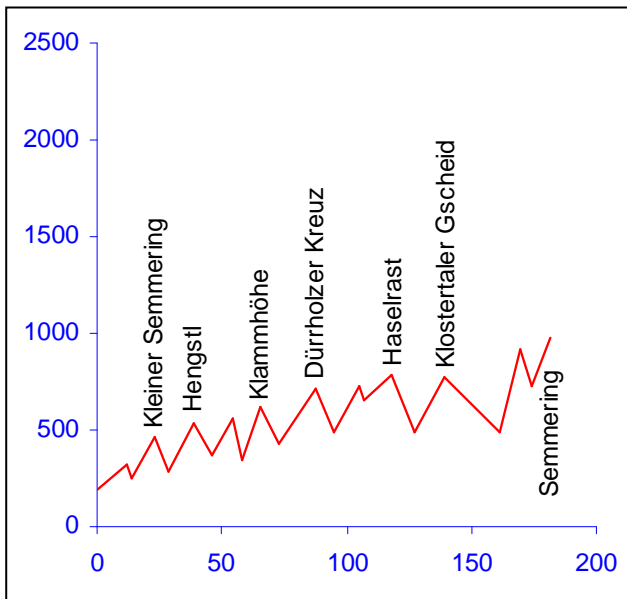
Patrick Schleppe

stage	distance (km)	climbing (m)
Wien-Hietzing - Semmering	182	2660
Semmering - Gai	148	2900
Gai - St. Nikolai	141	2460
St. Nikolai - Elsbethen	157	1290
Total	628	9310





Stage 1 (25 June 2008): Wien-Hietzing - Semmering



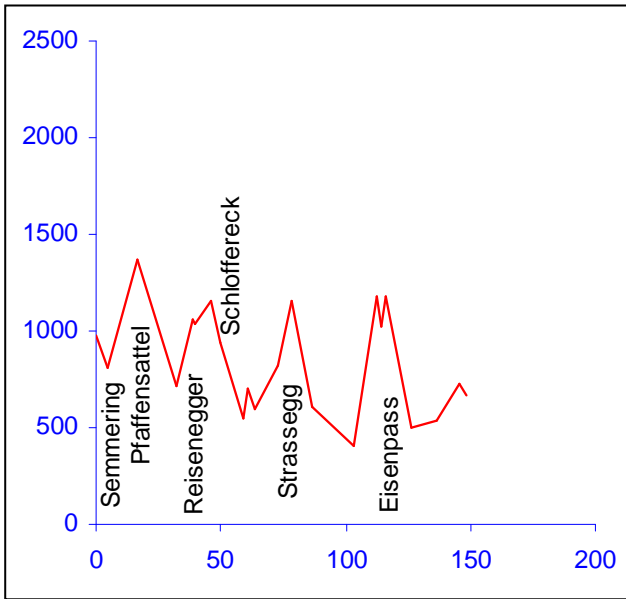
I took advantage of a meeting in Vienna to start my tour 2008 from there, having taken the bicycle along when going there by train. I started early in the morning after the end of the meeting. I did not have to cross the whole city, but to ride out of Vienna was not easy and i had to ask several times how to get to Kalksburg. From there, it was much easier. I rode to Breitenfurt-West, then over Kleiner Semmering to the Vienna River. For a short distance, i went along this valley, where there was quite some traffic, but then it was quiet for the rest of the day. The next three small passes led me through the Wienerwald: first the Hengstl, then Forsthof and Klammhöhe. The sky had been partly cloudy, but now it was clearing up as i was reaching Hainfeld. It was warm but not too much. Riding through Ramsau was not easy because the road was being rebuilt and the

sidewalks were at places very narrow. Nevertheless, i could continue towards Dürrholzer Kreuz, then down to Hölle (no, in spite of the name it was not hell). A very gentle climb led me south to Kalte Kuchl, where i joined my 2005 route for a short stretch. This time, however, i did not ride over the Rohrer Sattel but over a parallel pass, Haselrast. It was a very nice little road and an easy climb from the west side (the other way would be markedly harder). This, however, was leading me eastwards, which was not really my main direction. Thus, in Gutenstein, i turned right to the Klostertal valley and to the Klostertaler Gscheid. The next descent, into the Höllental, had again nothing to do with hell. There were many curves in this narrow valley. As it was opening to a plain near Reichenau, i went right to Prein, and then left on a small road towards Semmering. My counter was already showing close to 170 km, but i did not mind to ride up one more time. I just did not yet know that

it would be up and down and up and down and up till i would reach the Semmering pass, where i could find an hotel.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Hietzing	0	190	
Mauer	12	320	130
Kalksburg	14	250	
Kleiner Semmering	23	460	210
Pressbaum	29	280	
Hengstl	39	530	250
Klausen-Leopoldsdorf	46	370	
Forsthof	54	560	190
Laaben	58	350	
Klammhöhe	65	620	270
Hainfeld	73	430	
Dürrholzer Kreuz	88	710	280
Hölle	95	490	
Kalte Kuchl	105	730	240
Gegend	107	650	
Haselrast	118	780	130
Gutenstein	127	490	
Klostertaler Gscheid	139	770	280
Reichenau	161	490	
Orthof	170	920	430
Adlitzgraben	174	730	
Semmering	182	980	250
total	182		2660

Stage 2 (26 June 2008): Semmering - Gai



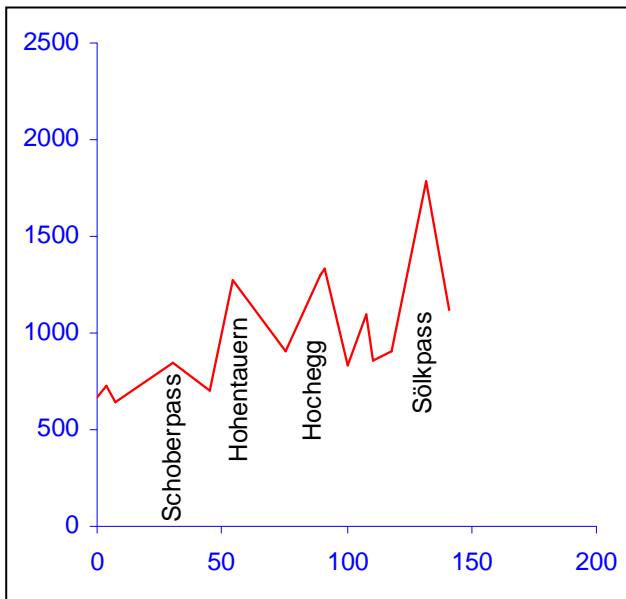
From Semmering, i went only a few kilometres down to the valley before turning left to Pfaffensattel. This climb was first very gentle, but then steep. The road was in bad state. Fortunately, the other side was better and i could ride fast down to Rettenegg and Ratten. From there, i went up to Auf der Halt, which is a small pass along a crest. I remained along this crest to the Toter Mann pass, but this was only an unpaved forest road. Still along the same crest, i came down to Kreuzwirt and, on a good road again, Schloffereck. The descent to Birkfeld was very nice. I climbed in the town of Birkfeld to the other side of the valley and took the road to Strassegg. Up to Gasen, it was an easy climb, but later it became steeper. There was little traffic and the temperature just above 20° allowed me to enjoy this climb. The descent to Breitenau was easy and quite fast. Near

Pernegg, i had to ride on the main road and the traffic was just a continuous line of cars and trucks. Fortunately, this was only for a short time. On my map, there was the Eisenpass waiting for me. Not clear from the map, however, was the state of the road, first narrow but perfect, then unpaved but easy, and finally very steep (more than 15%). If i had known, i would probably have chosen to ride over Bruck, in spite of the traffic; but i was already on the way and did not want to go back. Then i even took the wrong way at a crossing without signs, but this was already close to the pass and i finally found it, with its small chapel. The descent was also unpaved and i could not pay too much attention to the nice landscape. Reaching Oberaich (and good roads again), i was lucky enough to find tail winds to Leoben and further to St. Peter-Freienstein. This allowed my average speed to recover a bit. On a shortcut road between St. Peter and Kammer, i found a

room for the night at Gai. Later, for the third evening in a row, there were thunderstorms.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Semmering	0	980	
Jauern	5	810	
Pfaffensattel	17	1370	560
Ratten	32	720	
Auf der Halt	39	1060	340
Reisenegger	40	1030	
Wildwiesen	46	1160	130
Schloffereck	50	940	
Gschaid	59	550	
Birkfeld	61	700	150
Jägerleiten	64	600	
Gasen	73	820	220
Strassegg	78	1160	340
Breitenau	87	610	
Kirchdorf	103	410	
Zehnerhalt	112	1180	770
Forstgut	114	1020	
Eisenpass	116	1180	160
Oberaich	126	500	
Leoben	136	540	40
Störr	146	730	190
Gai-Edling	148	670	
total	148		2900

Stage 3 (27 June 2008): Gai - St. Nikolai



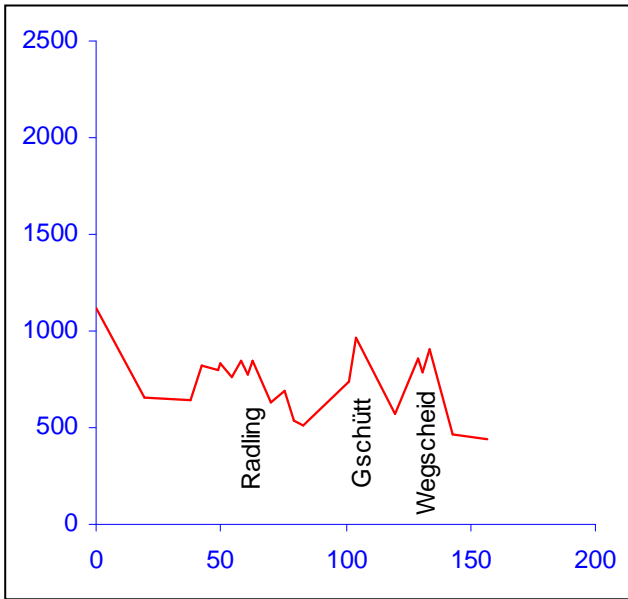
The sky was cloudy and the forecasts were for some rain showers as i left Gai. I was first riding towards the Liesing valley. Because of the parallel highway, there was only little traffic. The road was barely climbing but, nevertheless, it brought me to a pass: Schoberpass. In the descent, i followed the valley only down to Trieben. There, after buying a drink, i took the road to Hohentauern. It was first very steep, then more or less flat (but a new road was being built with a more constant slope). Later, the road was steep but not excessively. In the cool morning air, the climb did not pose any problem, nor did the long descent to St. Oswald. Then i turned right towards Hohegg, a pass easy to climb, but a bit higher than the previous one. Dark clouds were gathering and, even if it was noon, there was barely enough light to take a picture of the Gellsee. As i

was turning right towards Oberwölz, it began to rain. I hurried to the next farm and protected myself under a roof.

Fortunately, the rain lasted only a quarter of an hour and then i could continue towards Oberwölz. The road was going several times up and down. I stopped again in Schöder to drink something before attacking the Sölkpass. In the first half, the slope was very irregular. The second half was more constant: just steep. In the last few kilometres, i experienced strong and cool headwind. Arriving at the pass, i knew that my wind jacket would not be useless. I did not yet know that it would soon serve also as rain jacket. I could at least start the descent on a steep but dry road, but i came into a thunderstorm before reaching St. Nikolai. The ride became wet and cold, everything but enjoyable. I preferred to stop as soon as possible. After the cold rain, the warm shower in the guesthouse was a great comfort.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
Gai-Edling	0	670	
Glarsdorf	4	730	60
Seiz	7	640	
Schoberpass	30	850	210
Trieben	45	700	
Hohentauern	54	1270	570
Unterzeiring	76	900	
Hohegg	89	1300	400
Hoheggerbauer	91	1330	30
Oberwölz	100	830	
Vogelbichl	108	1090	260
St. Peter	111	860	
Schöder	118	900	40
Sölkpass	132	1790	890
St. Nikolai	141	1120	
total	141		2460

Stage 4 (28 June 2008): St. Nikolai - Elsbethen



The sky had largely cleared up during the night and i could look forward to a dry stage. Humidity, however, had probably found a way into the axis of my rear wheel: after a few kilometres of descent, it began to make an ominous noise. Obviously something for the next service. Presently, i just had to endure this noise... which receded and disappeared later the same day. Except for this technical problem, the ride down to the Enns valley was easy. At Trautenfels, i came again across the route of my 2005 tour. The ride over the Hinterberg and Bad Mitterndorf was more enjoyable than three years earlier: the weather was nice and i followed more closely the signs for cycling paths, which cost me some detours but kept me out of the traffic. Near Pichl, i took the small road to the right, leading me out of the main valley and to the Radlingpass. From

there, the descent brought me to Bad Aussee, where i just crossed the town, riding to the west along the Koppentraun River. The road did not follow exactly the river, going steep up, then almost flat and finally very steep down to Obertraun. At the highest point, there was a sign indicating "Koppen Pass 690 m", but it is not a real pass in the geographical sense of a crossing between crest and valley lines.

Arriving in Obertraun, i followed the road to Halstatt around the Halstatt Lake. There is a tunnel to drive around this town, but the bicycles are led along the small streets close to the shore. There were many tourists around. After Halstatt, i continued first along the lake, then turned left (and up) to Gosau. From there, there was a short but steep climb, and i reached Pass Gschütt. After the descent, i did not follow the main road climbing to the other side of the valley. Instead, i followed the stream (Lammer). Further, at another place named Pichl, i took the small and nice road up to St. Koloman, with Wegscheid as the last pass of this tour.

	distance (km)	altitude (m)	climbing (m)
St. Nikolai	0	1120	
Stein	19	650	
Trautenfels	38	640	
Klachau	42	820	180
Neuhofen	49	800	
Bad Mitterndorf	50	830	30
Rödschnitz	54	760	
Knoppen	58	840	80
Äussere Kainisch	61	770	
Radlingpass	63	840	70
Bad Aussee	70	630	
Koppenpass	76	690	60
Obertraun	79	530	
Hallstatt	83	510	
Gosau	101	740	230
Pass Gschütt	104	960	220
Pichl	120	570	
Schönau	129	860	290
Grubach	131	780	
Wegscheid	134	910	130
Vigaun	143	470	
Elsbethen	157	440	
total	168		1640

After the last pass came obviously the last descent, which led me to the town of Hallein. Then i followed the bicycle path along the Salzach River. At Elsbethen, near Salzburg, i stopped at a hostelry directly at the bike path and at the river.

The next day, i would only have a few kilometres before reaching Salzburg and taking a train to Zurich.

This tour had not been very long, but it had brought me through nice landscapes and on roads mostly with little traffic.